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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KCOR](#) [KDEM](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: ANTI-CORRUPTION ITEMS

REF: A. BAGHDAD 441
[1](#)B. BAGHDAD 101

Classified By: JOSEPH STAFFORD, ANTI-CORRUPTION COORDINATOR, REASON 1.4
(B AND D)

PRIME MINISTER'S ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORTS

[1](#)1. (C) Amidst the GOI's heightened profile of late on the anti-corruption dossier (ref a), sources in the Inspectors General (IG) corps claimed to us that PM Maliki recently instructed each of the 35 IG's (located in ministries and other GOI institutions) to come up with two "major" anti-corruption cases to demonstrate the GOI's professed commitment to tackling corruption. Our sources, who said Maliki sought cases involving senior officials, were unsure -- as are we -- whether the PM's reported initiative would produce much in the way of concrete results. They noted that there were few examples in recent years of the successful prosecution of senior officials on corruption charges; we were told that regarding the 87 corruption-related convictions by the Iraqi judiciary in 2008, as reported by the Commission on Integrity (ref b), the defendants were by and large lower-ranking functionaries.

PUBLIC DEMAND FOR ACTION AGAINST CORRUPTION

[1](#)2. (C) In a recent conversation with Emboffs, the head of the GOI's National Media Center, Ali Mohamed, said the Iraqi public was keen to see action against corrupt officials. To prove his point, he cited the results of a January 2009 poll of 5,000 Iraqis representing all socio-economic, sectarian, and ethnic groups. Asked to rank ten or so areas for GOI action, the respondents listed battling corruption as the second leading priority, following provision of public services and ahead of, for example, public security. Mohamed added that corruption had been a factor in voters' ouster of incumbents in the January 31 Provincial Council elections and that the winning candidates' prospects of being re-elected would hinge greatly on their ability to provide clean government. He acknowledged that anti-corruption efforts were hampered by the weakness of the COI and IG's and urged continued capacity-building assistance to these institutions by the U.S. and other foreign donors.

GLOBAL INTEGRITY'S ASSESSMENT OF CORRUPTION IN IRAQ

[1](#)3. (U) The U.S.-based NGO, Global Integrity (GI), recently issued its annual report on corruption, covering 57 countries, most in the "developing" category. For the first time, GI included Iraq in its report, and, not surprisingly, identified numerous shortcomings in the country's anti-corruption regime and placed it in the bottom-ranking category, "very weak." At the same time, GI noted positive elements in the GOI's anti-corruption effort, citing, in particular, Iraq's relatively well-developed legal framework. Moreover, among the other four Arab countries, plus the West Bank, that were surveyed -- all placed in the "very weak

category" -- Iraq was ranked virtually on par with Egypt and placed ahead of, in order, the West Bank, Morocco, and Yemen. (A more detailed report on the GI assessment follows via septel.)

MEETING WITH INSPECTORS GENERAL

13. (U) On February 24, the Anti-Corruption Coordination Office (ACCO) organized a meeting between the GOI's IG corps and visiting State Inspectors joined by Embassy GAO and SIGIR officials. The USG side provided briefings designed to familiarize the Iraqis with the respective missions of State/OIG, GAO, and SIGIR. Judging from the IG's questions and comments in response to the presentations and positive remarks afterward, the Iraqis found the event beneficial and Qremarks afterward, the Iraqis found the event beneficial and requested follow-up meetings to discuss possible areas of cooperation.

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